

**Subpart C—Fire Protection and Law Enforcement Employees of Public Agencies**

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

**§ 553.200 Statutory provisions: section 13(b)(20).**

(a) Section 13(b)(20) of the FLSA provides a complete overtime pay exemption for “any employee of a public agency who in any workweek is employed in fire protection activities or any employee of a public agency who in any workweek is employed in law enforcement activities (including security personnel in correctional institutions), if the public agency employs during the workweek less than 5 employees in fire protection or law enforcement activities, as the case may be.”

(b) In determining whether a public agency qualifies for the section 13(b)(20) exemption, the fire protection and law enforcement activities are considered separately. Thus, if a public agency employs less than five employees in fire protection activities, but five or more employees in law enforcement activities (including security personnel in a correctional institution), it may claim the exemption for the fire protection employees but not for the law enforcement employees. No distinction is made between full-time and part-time employees, or between employees on duty and employees on leave status, and all such categories must be counted in determining whether the exemption applies. Individuals who are not considered “employees” for purposes of the FLSA by virtue of section 3(e) of the Act (including persons who are “volunteers” within the meaning of § 553.101, and “elected officials and their appointees” within the meaning of § 553.11) are not counted in determining whether the section 13(b)(20) exemption applies.

(c) The section 13(b)(20) exemption applies on a workweek basis. It is therefore possible that employees may be subject to maximum hours standard in certain workweeks, but not in others. In those workweeks in which the section 13(b)(20) exemption does not apply, the public agency is entitled to

utilize the section 7(k) exemption which is explained below in § 553.201.

[52 FR 2032, Jan. 16, 1987; 52 FR 2648, Jan. 23, 1987]

**§ 553.201 Statutory provisions: section 7(k).**

(a) Section 7(k) of the Act provides a partial overtime pay exemption for fire protection and law enforcement personnel (including security personnel in correctional institutions) who are employed by public agencies on a work period basis. This section of the Act formerly permitted public agencies to pay overtime compensation to such employees in work periods of 28 consecutive days only after 216 hours of work. As further set forth in § 553.230 of this part, the 216-hour standard has been replaced, pursuant to the study mandated by the statute, by 212 hours for fire protection employees and 171 hours for law enforcement employees. In the case of such employees who have a work period of at least 7 but less than 28 consecutive days, overtime compensation is required when the ratio of the number of hours worked to the number of days in the work period exceeds the ratio of 212 (or 171) hours to 28 days.

(b) As specified in §§ 553.20 through 553.28 of subpart A, workers employed under section 7(k) may, under certain conditions, be compensated for overtime hours worked with compensatory time off rather than immediate overtime premium pay.

**§ 553.202 Limitations.**

The application of sections 13(b)(20) and 7(k), by their terms, is limited to public agencies, and does not apply to any private organization engaged in furnishing fire protection or law enforcement services. This is so even if the services are provided under contract with a public agency.

EXEMPTION REQUIREMENTS

**§ 553.210 Fire protection activities.**

(a) As used in sections 7(k) and 13(b)(20) of the Act, the term “any employee . . . in fire protection activities” refers to any employee (1) who is employed by an organized fire department or fire protection district; (2) who